

The Judgment Of Paris



Peter Fandel

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The Judgment of Paris

BY

PETER FANDEL



BOSTON
THE POET LORE COMPANY
Publishers
1905

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Printed at
THE GORHAM PRESS
Boston, U. S. A.

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Thank you for your understanding.

To

LEO G. BRUENNER

Whose friendly sympathy was of large encouragement to my struggling powers, I dedicate this volume.

DRAMATIC PERSONAGES

HERMES

PRIAM

PARIS

HECTOR

MESTOR

ANTIPHON

POLITES

HYPOTHUS

HEMEROS

HERA

PALLAS

APHRODITE

HECUBA

CASSANDRA

OENONE

Trojan Maidens; Court Dignitaries; Priests; Citizens; and Virgins of the Temple.

ACT I

On Mount Ida

*Dramatic personages of the first act:—*HERMES.
PARIS. HERA. PALLAS. APHRODITE. OENONE.

SCENE. *A cozy nook on a shoulder-like projection of Mount Ida. Through a thin veil of boughs ILIUM and its acropolis is seen looming from the distance.*

(OENONE is sitting in the crotch of a fallen tree, while PARIS, stretched on the ground before her, has his head couched in her lap.)

OENONE. (*Bending down and kissing him.*) A kiss for thy thoughts, dearest.

PARIS. They are thine, love.

OENONE. Thou wert silent so long, and hadst such a far-away look in thine eyes, that I wondered where thy fancy might be roving.

PARIS. Where else could it be, but among yonder pile of glimmering palaces. Ah, OENONE, a mighty yearning seems to draw me thither; in my every dream it appears and, like a Siren, beckons sweetly promising. I fear I cannot content myself much longer here; for, full of hope and youthful vigor, I fain would breast the larger currents of life.

OENONE. O speak no more, PARIS, speak no more,

for reptile-like thy words coil themselves about my heart and threaten to stifle it.

PARIS. OENONE, a man cannot, like a woman, content himself with mere love.

OENONE. Alas, that it should be so! No thought nor yearning have I, that is not centered in thee; while thou but deignest me the merest pittance of love.

PARIS. OENONE, have peace. Thou knowest reproach can but embitter me and turn me willfully perverse.

OENONE. Nay, be not angry with me, love; I meant not to reproach thee. Come, rest thee again, and with a tender ditty I shall woo thee back unto content.

PARIS. OENONE, thou knowest that but for thee I curb this yearning—yearning—yearning that never will be still.

OENONE. Yet my whole yearning is but to love thee.

PARIS. I love thee none the less because I yearn for a field of larger action; no, OENONE, I love thee the more, for it is for love of thee that I am ambitious.

OENONE. O PARIS, canst thou not see that I would keep thee all to myself—that I would not let the world even know of thy being, lest it should grow enamored of thee and entice thee away from me forever? This, this is the argus-eyed fear that haunts me, and lashes my heart to distraction at the mere thought of thy going.

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PARIS. Let us have done, OENONE; why idly provoke ourselves? It was but a momentary dream, and, like many a one before, it will soon be dissipated into nothingness. Hark! was that not the soughing of a rapid wing? Lo, behold!—on yonder cliff!

OENONE. Why, if I see rightly, it is HERMES, the messenger of the gods! Come, PARIS, let us avoid him.

PARIS. It is too late; he is upon us now.

(*Enter HERMES.*)

HERMES. I greet thee, PARIS, well favored of the gods.

PARIS. How can I understand thee?

HERMES. Listen to the messenger of ZEUS: before thee shortly will appear three goddesses in rivalry divided who should be the fairer, and for thee it was reserved to give the judgment.

OENONE. O HERMES, why comest thou to afflict us with the wrangels of the gods? Turn, turn, unto thy heights again and begrudge us not our meager peace.

PARIS. OENONE, cease; thou shalt not deprive me of this glorious privilege. (*To HERMES.*) I pray thee, heed her not, but behold me obedient to the wishes of the gods.

OENONE. Paris, if thou lovest me—if thou lovest thyself, spurn this preferment, for I feel my spirit crying out against it.

PARIS. OENONE, I fear I indulged thee too largely,

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for thou fain wouldst tyrannize over my every wish. Yet I'll have my will in this. (*To HERMES.*) Proceed, I am attentive to thy further word.

HERMES. When the goddesses appear each will be permitted a plea in her own behalf, after which the awarding of this apple (*giving PARIS a golden apple,*) shall constitute thy judgment. So keep thyself in readiness, my return will herald their approach. (*Exit H.*)

OENONE. O PARIS, what hast thou done! my heart is full of dark forbodings.

PARIS. Nay, full of vain fears.

OENONE. Believe it not. I see the far import of things, while thou art taken with their immediate flush.

PARIS. And to be ever taken so, is all my wish. For I would not embitter a happy presence with a fear of sorrows yet to be. Who knows what the future has in store? no one. Yet a pleasure quaffed is ever mine. See, love, I'll not refrain from thy lips because I know their bloom will fade. Nay, fonder and more eager will I taste of their nectar—thus and thus, (*kissing her*) until a sweet intoxication overcomes me beyond which even the gods have no fuller joy.

OENONE. My love, mine own!

PARIS. Yes, dear one, let the goddesses appear; their haughty beauty may perchance move me to admiration, but never can woo to rapture as thy love-tempered charms. And, believe me, if I could dis-

pose of this apple inscribed "to the fairest" at will, it would be unhesitatingly thine.

OENONE. O PARIS, to the power of thy persuasion even Hades would seem an Elysium to me.

PARIS. HERMES now returns. Go, OENONE, screen thyself,—yonder flowering vine might serve thee well therefor,—and behold thy PARIS adjudge gods.

(*Exit OENONE. Enter HERMES.*)

HERMES. The timely moment is at hand: the goddesses approach.

PARIS. I pray thee, who is she who, speeding on a pair of stately peacocks, comes yonder in an azure car all wheeled with blazzing suns?

HERMES. That is HERA, the Queen of Olympus.

PARIS. And she who closely follows her, drawn by a brace of owls, in chariot of brazen mold and with heroical devise embossed?

HERMES. That is PALLAS, the illustrious Maid.

PARIS. And she who, lonely by herself, comes urging on a flock of sparrows tethered to a seashell finely swelled and rosy-tinted?

HERMES. That is APHRODITE, the goddess of love.

PARIS. Now they have alighted on yonder brink, and hitherward are coming. Alas! I fear preferment here an arduous task; for which ever the eye last rests on, seems the fairer.

(*Enter HERA, PALLAS, and APHRODITE. HERA steps first to the natural vantage-ground and addresses PARIS.*)

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HERA. PARIS, the Queen of Olympus, the sister-wife of ZEUS, trustfully condescends to ask her due from thy hands. Recognize thy opportunity, then, and use it well, and I promise thee power and dominion beyond thy utmost dream. Lo! what is more glorious than power, what more covetable than dominion? With these thou mayest cater to thy every whim, and juggle with the fortunes of nations. So go to counsel with thyself, and secure this, the boon of all boons, by awarding me the apple.

(PARIS lifts his hand as if he wanted to present HERA with the apple, but is restrained therein by PALLAS stepping to the vantage-ground.)

PALLAS. PARIS, I perceive by thy motion that thou understandest the value of power, and therefrom take assurance that thou wilt award me the apple. HERA has but the ability to bestow thee with a semblance of power, while I can give thee its very soul—Knowledge. For have what power thou mayest, yet lack the wisdom of its proper use, and it can only result in woe and destruction. So be tractable while yet it is time; and by a righteous judgment secure that for thyself of which no one may rob thee, and that of every condition can make a treasure-house of blessedness and peace.

OENONE. (*From her hiding place, in a loud whisper.*) Give it to her, PARIS.

PARIS. (*Lifting up the apple to PALLAS.*) Surely, thou—

APHRO. (*Stepping forward and interrupting him.*)

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Hold, PARIS! wilt thou prefer power and knowledge, to love? No, beware of being so foolhardy. See what ungainly affairs they are without love;—mere charnel-bones, void of life and grace. Nay, PARIS, be not deluded; trust thy native instinct and give me the apple: and in reward therefor I promise thee the fairest of woman, and with her an Elysium of bliss.

(PARIS goes toward APHRODITE, and, falling on his knee before her, gives her the apple.)

OENONE. (*From her hiding place.*) Hold, PARIS!
PALLAS. PARIS.

HERA. Heed thy action, PARIS!

PARIS. (*To APHRODITE.*) Take it—take it, it is thine!

HERA. Foolhardy mortal, thou shalt rue this bitterly!

PALLAS. Yes, be assured of that, if there is such a possibility in our combined strength.

APHR. He need not fear you, I shall know how to protect him.

HERA. Thou art confident in thy triumph, yet doubt not, thy hour of humiliation shall come.

HERMES. There being no further need of my services, I might as well depart.

HERA. (*Sarcastically.*) Yes, and with thee take our compliments for thy brilliant manipulation of this affair.

PALLAS. I haven't the least doubt but that we owe our defeat principally to him; for from the very start he seemed inclined to give her the apple.

HERMES. Defeat is ever of a slanderous tongue, so I shall deign you no reply. Yet in justice to myself I will say this much: if ever, I served honestly in this, and for the result you have but yourselves to blame. (*Exit HERMES.*)

APHR. Come, PARIS, it were senseless to wrangle with embittered minds. Besides, I have an important revelation for thee. (*Exit APHRODITE and PARIS.*)

HERA. O, I will be revenged for this, and if I have to set heaven and earth in motion therefor!

PALLAS. Whatever thou undertakest, depend on me for thy accomplice. I could have borne defeat, had it come to me by honest merit; but that such a piece of shallow conceit—such a mask of mere piquant manner should bear away the prize, is an extreme bitterness to me. Yet, how shall we proceed in the matter?

HERA. I cannot say as yet. I think it best to learn what plan she has with her minion before we choose our way.

(*Enter OENONE.*)

OENONE. (*Anxiously.*) Where can they have gone?

HERA. (*Aside to PALLAS.*) Ah, here is our quarry. (*To OENONE.*) Where else couldst thou suppose, my dear maiden, than to some well secluded thicket for sweet dalliance.

OENONE. O say not so—say not so, or thou wilt

drive me mad! Yet I need not fear, PARIS will spurn her.

HERA. Poor simpleton! hadst thou seen him fall prone to her enticement a few moments ago, thou wouldst not be so assured of that.

OENONE. Nay, nay, he could not be untrue to me, —I know it—I know it, and won't admit a doubt!

HERA. I see by the very emphasis with which thou wouldst make thyself believe it, that thou art not all too sure of the fact.

OENONE. He is so good—so beautiful, that I fear every one must love him.

HERA. What would that matter, as long as he only loved thee?

OENONE. I—I know that he only loves me, for no matter where he goes he ever tenderly returns to me.

HERA. Yes, and as tenderly returns to others. Oh, I know these men!

OENONE. I cannot delay with you any longer; I must find them.

HERA. And when thou hast found them, thinkest thou that thou wilt be a welcome intruder on their fond seclusion?

OENONE. Oh, why dost thou plague me thus—why torture my heart to its utmost endurance?

PALLAS. If by this time thou canst not perceive that we are laboring for thy good, it were useless for us to tell thee so.

HERA. Listen, girl: to face the matter rightly, I

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really do not think that APHRODITE has designs on thy lover, but she certainly has designs with him, and it is these that we would help thee frustrate.

OENONE. If you wish me well, pray, advise me.

HERA. As yet we do not know what her intentions with him are; but, to judge from general appearances, they are liable to separate him from thee forever.

OENONE. Oh, I knew that misery would follow in your wake—I knew that nothing good would come from your approach!

PALLAS. Blame not us for that; we are like everything else, good to the good, and evil to the evil.

OENONE. But how do you intend to aid me?

HERA. To effectively counterplot her we must be fully aware what her plans with thy lover are. Therefore, we would have thee learn all particulars regarding them, and inform us thereof at thy earliest convenience.

PALLAS. (*Urgently.*) PARIS is hastily returning yonder; come, let us depart.

HERA. Thy fate is in thine own hands now; if thou aidest not the willing gods, there is no help for thee. (*Exeunt HERA and PALLAS.*)

PARIS. (*Without.*) OENONE! OENONE! (*He enters and embraces OENONE joyfully, who at once arouses from her sullen mood and passionately clings to him.*)

OENONE. I knew that they were speaking falsely—I knew that thou wouldst return to me!

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PARIS. What, have they been trying to poison thy mind against me?

OENONE. They told me she intended to take thee away from me forever.

PARIS. And thou didst believe them?

OENONE. No, no, I would not—I could not, though it were the truth. Yet, why didst thou think her the fairer? . . . I thought her hateful, fawning, and—and—Oh, would thou hadst given the apple for knowledge rather than love.

PARIS. How could I, thou foolish little vixen, with all my heart full of its sweetness. Yet let me tell thee, OENONE, that by giving it for love I attained knowledge also.

OENONE. How that?

PARIS. OENONE, I am the son of a king. (OENONE *shrinks from him.*) Yes, yonder palaces, to which my yearning ever went, are the royal habitations of my father.

OENONE. PARIS, PARIS, say it is not so, say it is not so!

PARIS. What has come over thee, OENONE? I came hither with the hope of seeing thee jubilant of my good fortune, and now I find thee sullen and indisposed.

OENONE. (*As if she heard him not.*) Then, then the goddesses spoke the truth!

PARIS. Listen, OENONE, perhaps thou doest not realize things rightly. She told me that I was the second son of king PRIAM, and that because my

mother dreamt at my birth she had brought forth a burning torch, the soothsayers, proclaiming it an evil omen, cast me out to die; yet that a passing herdsman, hearing my cry, delivered me from the death to which I was exposed, and reared me as his own. And to-morrow, when all Troy in festive celebration is before the walls, I am to take my fairest bullock and go there, and, with the secret help of the goddess, shall be made known to my father, and placed into my birthright at last.

OENONE. And be lost to me forever.

PARIS. OENONE!

OENONE. Yes, I see it clearly. Thou wilt go into the busy world, and with its revels and diversions crowd out every thought of me; while I must rove about the glens alone, and be haunted at every step with a memory of him that is gone. O OENONE, OENONE, would that thou never hadst been born, or at least hadst spurned Love, the despoiler of all native happiness and peace!

PARIS. OENONE!

OENONE. Let us say no more. When love has to descend to pleading, every added word can but lessen its power. Go, go, claim thy fortune—rise on a broken heart to glory; I shall seek the shadowy coves and echoing caverns, and on the reverberations of my plaint feed myself into a specter of grief.

PARIS. OENONE, wouldst thou selfishly keep me low when glorious heights are beckoning?

OENONE. Nay, nay; go if thou wouldst, I have

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come to my senses at last: if there thy goal of contentment lies, it were of no avail to try to withhold thee from it. . . . Yet, PARIS, thou wilt not forget me altogether—thou wilt come to me sometimes with the old, fond caress, wilt thou not? PARIS. Why OENONE, if once I have come to my own, I will return and take thee to abide with me always.

OENONE. I cannot indulge that hope, PARIS; for the river god CERBRON is my father, and I am born a mountain Nymph. We can draw mortals to us, and consort with them in our glades and glens, but never may we enter their populous cities, and prosper.

PARIS. But, perchance, when I have tasted of this larger life which lies so enticingly before me now, I shall be only too glad to return to these peaceful haunts.

OENONE. Ah, if I could let these words unto belief, PARIS, my grief were half soothed. But, alas! human nature is all too plastic, it readily loses its love for the old and adapts itself to new environment.

PARIS. If I ever forget thee, OENONE, let me be accurst.

OENONE. No, no, PARIS, do not say that; for no matter what I have to endure, I could not bear to see thee suffer. Yet go, go, delay no longer; only remember that thy absence with me shall be one longing for thy return.

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PARIS. Farewell, love! no matter what fortune is mine, thou shalt ever be my fondest, dearest wish.
(With that he kisses her and, after a few loving caresses, hastens away.)

OENONE. Gone—gone, and with him all my joy, all my peace! Cold—cold and unfriendly the old familiar haunts shall glower now, and dishearten me with their sullen silence. O IDA, sweet nurse of my youth, even thou seemest changed; for pitiless thou beholdest thy child in woe, nor, as of yore, stoopest to it with tender guile and loving glad-someness. . . . Ye furies of parted love, are you already on my tracks—harassing and lashing with never tiring might? Oh, how shall I bide the hours then when they have numbered more and more, and vainly I shall hearken for his returning step? how pass the nightly watches when fancy strips all reasonable tether and storms to wild chimeras of fear and despair? Alas, now only dawns on me the terror of his going—now only the dread of my utter abandonment! Ah me! I shall surely die, alone here in fanciful idleness.

(HERA and PALLAS re-enter softly and overhear the last words.)

HERA. That were sheer folly; thou must follow him and keep us informed of his every movement.

OENONE. What, you here again? Begone, I hate—I detest you; for you are the cause of all my misery.

PALLAS. Thou art frantic, child.

OENONE. Ay, would that I were dead.

HERA. If we harmed thee, it was so against our will.

PALLAS. Yes, that is surely evident, since we now would aid thee.

OENONE. You aid, you weak embodiments of conceit;—misery you cause, but no good. You boast of power, and you cannot turn one poor human heart to love beyond its own blind impulse. . . . Begone, I hate—I detest you.

HERA. Then take the consequence of thy folly.

OENONE. I will, and gladly; for it cannot be much worse than that of your wisdom.

PALLAS. Thou art insolent.

OENONE. And you are crafty, and would but work upon me for your malicious ends.

HERA. Very well, then, remain here; it is nothing to us, thou art the sole loser.

OENONE. No, I will not remain here; secretly will I follow him and hover about his path: yet not in your service, but in that of my love. (*Exit OENONE.*)

HERA. Well, let her go; I see she would have proved a very unreliable tool after all, and at the most critical moment might have given way. Besides, we overheard enough to guide us onward for the present. Listen, I have an idea: we will disguise ourselves and as men attend to-morrow's fete.

PALLAS. That is an excellent scheme; for thus we shall be kings of the situation, and able to baulk her at every turn.

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HERA. Come, let us proceed.

PALLAS. Yes, let us proceed, for in procedure only
lies success.

CURTAIN

ACT II

Before the Walls of Troy

*Dramatic personages of the second act:—*PRIAM, PARIS, HECTOR, MESTOR, ANTIPHON, POLITES, HYPOTHUS, HECUBA, OENONE, CASSANDRA, HERA, PALLAS, APHRODITE, PRIESTS, DIGNATARIES, CITIZENS, TROJAN MAIDENS, GENERAL POPULACE.

SCENE. *A large plain, with the walls of Troy in the rear and its acropolis looming over them from the distance. To the right, a pillared portico; to the left, approach to the race course.*

(Three citizens to one side in conversation.)

I C. The pageant is coming; look, they are breaking way for it.

II C. I wish this business were done with, and they would begin the games.

III C. Have you heard the latest?

II C. No; what is it?

III C. They admitted a mere herdsman to run as one of the contestants in the chariot race.

I C. You don't say so?

II C. Why, I thought the chariot race had been reserved exclusively for the princes of the royal house?

III C. So it was.

I C. There must be something special about him, then, or they would not have accorded him that privilege.

III C. Not that anyone knows of. He merely brought the preferred bullock for to-day's sacrifice, for which the King assured him the grant of a wish; and that is what he chose.

II C. What, permission to contend in the chariot race?

III C. Yes.

II C. Why, how foolhardy.

I C. Yes; for he certainly has not the ghost of a chance to outrival MESTOR.

II C. And if he had, I fear it would go hard with him; for MESTOR has a large following here to-day, that were liable to resent the humiliating of its champion by a mere intruder.

III C. The pageant is approaching; we must look to our places or shall be crowded out.

II C. Yes; and I am anxious now to get a glimpse at our ambitious cowherd.

(They pass out laughing. Enter two Trojan maidens, closely followed by OENONE.)

I M. Come, yonder is a good place; I must see him again.

II M. Beware, or thou wilt lose thy heart on him.

I M. Alas, I fear it is already too late to beware. Know, as the pageant passed through the gate, the quarters being rather narrow, I came almost in immediate contact with him. Instinctively I grasped

for the flower on my bosom, and offered it to him; and he took it—took it with such a look as went to my blood like some rich wine.

II M. Then come, let us see whether in passing he remembers thee yet.

(Exeunt Maidens.)

OENONE. *(Who had overheard all.)* Oh, my heart is bursting! I fear I cannot remain here, for every eager gaze that falls on him is a torture to me. Is there then no one to have pity on me!

(HERA and PALLAS, disguised as men, had just entered, and overheard the last words.)

HERA. *(Stepping up to her.)* Art thou in trouble, Maiden?

OENONE. What is that to thee. . . . Let me pass.

HERA. It is nothing to me, unless thou regrettest a lost opportunity.

OENONE. Let me pass, idle mocker thou, I'll not serve thy humor. *(With that she forces her way by HERA, and is lost in the crowd.)*

HERA. She is as hateful as ever.

(The noise of the approaching pageant is coming nearer and nearer. Enter Priests, followed by PARIS leading the sacrificial bullock. Next appear several Court-dignitaries. Then come PRIAM and HECUBA, borne in pendent chairs, by slaves. The Princes of the royal house bring up the rear. When all have passed over the stage, the crowd follows in

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their wake. HERA and PALLAS remain behind alone.)

PALLAS. What can APHRODITE intend with having her minion accepted as one of the contestants in the race?

HERA. Doubtless, to show him of such excellence that his father will open his arms to him in glad reception.

PALLAS. If that be her aim, she, certainly, has chosen the wrong means to secure it; for there is no possible chance for him to outdo approved skill.

HERA. Fear not, she will know how to bring him out ahead.

PALLAS. If she uses foul means, we must expose her.

HERA. (*Hatefully.*) Yes, yes, anything that will harass her—anything that will let her know that we are hounding her to the last breath. Yet, hush! I see her yonder looking at us with a knowing eye; evidently we are recognized, for she is coming directly toward us.

(*Enter APHRODITE.*)

APHRO. What, you here, and in such attire? Why, you look like a pair of dashing young blades, out to play havoc with tender hearts.

HERA. We are out to play havoc, but not with tender hearts.

APHRO. Not with tender hearts? Surely, you look perfectly harmless otherwise.

HERA. We shall see.

APHRO. I hope, (*sarcastically.*) Gentlemen, that

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you are not deluding yourselves with false prospects?

HERA. Permit that to be our affair.

APHRO. So you are determined on a feud?

HERA. Ay, to the bitter end.

APHRO. Then be assured that it shall be bitter for you.

PALLAS. Be not boastful on a past success; Fortune is a fickle goddess.

APHRO. Not to those who knew how to prize her favors.

PALLAS. But to those who are too sure of her constancy.

APHRO. Let us cease talking; action alone should be the speech of gods. (*Exit APHRODITE.*)

HERA. Now, PALLAS, to work: the sacrifice is over and the race will soon be on. Go thou along the dusty course and, invisible to mortal-eye, wherever possible baulk her effort to advance her minion in the race.

PALLAS. Yet let thou no chance escape thee here to thwart her, for, scenting me on her tracks, she might change her plans.

HERA. Fear not, I shall not be nodding. (*Exit PALLAS.*) Ah, here comes CASSANDRA, the mad prophetess. She is aware that PARIS is her brother, and believes him returned to fulfill the prophesy that clings to his life; but despairing to bring the people to her conviction, she walks about in muffled silence. Perhaps it were well for me to arouse her

somewhat on the matter. I know it can be of no avail directly, for the people spurn her prophecies and mock her utterance, but indirectly it might give my words prestige if, as a last resource, I should be compelled to take it up to secure our end. (*Enter CASSANDRA, melancholy and despondent.*) Sleepeth CASSANDRA or has the prophetic voice grown dumb?

CASSANDRA. (*Startled.*) Ah, who art thou that graspeth with rude hand into my meditations—who of all men that believeth in the voice of CASSANDRA? HERA. Ask not, for my identity is purposely veiled to thee; but go, awaken ILIUM to its impending danger.

CASS. Alas! the people spurn my prophecy and are deaf to my cry. A fatal blindness has befallen them, and my labor would be vain.

HERA. Believe it not; the god-given voice speaks never in vain: somewhere its counsels take root and grow to fruition. Have courage, therefor, and doubt not thy labor by its immediate result. The spirit of a true word is ever active, and eventually matures to purpose.

CASS. Ah, refreshingly fall thy words on my heart, and though I see not, I hear a divine presence.

HERA. Do as I bade thee, and let the whisper of divine approval in thy heart, in success or failure, alone be a sufficient reward for thee. Farewell! (*Exit HERA.*)

CASS. Hold, hold, I pray thee! Alas, he is gone.

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Surely, the gods must be with me, and sent him to strengthen my fainting heart to its duty, ay—to its duty even against a brother's life.

(OENONE enters and falls on her knees before CASSANDRA.)

OENONE. Pity, pity one who is in sad distress.

CASS. Who art thou? Whence thy coming?

OENONE. I am a Nymph from the mountain, and the river god CERBRON is my father.

CASS. What seekest thou of me then, a poor mortal?

OENONE. Alas! I am lost in this multitudinous life, and in utter confusion.

CASS. How wouldst thou have me aid thee?

OENONE. Take me in thy care, and let me feel that there is at least one being in all this world to whom I may cling.

CASS. But why returnest thou not to thy native haunts?

OENONE. My heart is love-lorn and must abide near him who is its peace.

CASS. Say no more. My sympathy is thine and all the comfort that it may bestow. Yet at this moment I cannot delay with thee; an urgent duty is before me, and over-rides my personal will.

OENONE. Alas, what shall become of me!

CASS. Listen: go to the temple of which I am priestess, and on my return thither I will befriend thee unto need. (*Exit CASSANDRA. OENONE leaves*

in the opposite direction. Enter APHRODITE and PARIS.)

PARIS. I fear I shall have small chance to win in the race, for the steeds allotted to me seem past their vigor.

APHRO. Be not afraid, I will aid thee swiftly round the goal to turn the flying wheel. Yet, perchance, some precept to guide thy conduct would not be amiss. So hear: have no fear of thy rivals if, though better equipped, their judgment compares not with thine. It is not strength, but art that attains the goal. The racer more than chariot and steeds wins the course. His eye, assured, foreruns the way, and his unerring hand now contracts and now relaxes the rein unto observed need. Seest thou the goal? It is yonder aged trunk of some once stately oak, with stone enclosed round to a circle for the wheeling car. It is a tomb, perhaps, and of old as now served to limit the race. Bear close to this and cautiously bend to the left hand steed, yet urge the right and give him all the reins, while thy firm hand restrains his fellow's head and turns him short till the wheel wellnigh brush the goal. So thou shalt win the race and outdo unadvised swiftness.

PARIS. And yet I have my fears; for not only in this, but in everything else my short-comings are too obvious.

APHRO. PARIS, once for all, thou wilt have to trust thyself into my hands completely. Be perfectly im-

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passive, follow the course of least resistance, and I will see to it that at last thou shalt find thyself at the wished for goal.

PARIS. But why take this round-about way? Why not be revealed to my father directly?

APHRO. Policy is the great game of existence, and an awkward move may blight the fairest opportunity. Know, the very advice I gave thee to win the race I must employ to reinstate thee in thy birth-right; for HERA and PALLAS are determined to work against me, and will go to the utmost to defeat my plans. Come, let us go aside, some people are approaching, and I have yet a few things to inform thee of privately.

(Exeunt APHRODITE and PARIS. Some people are slowly straggling on the stage now.)

I CITIZEN. See, the raving CASSANDRA is coming hitherward.

II C. I suppose her father refused to lend her ear, so she comes to inflict her rant on us.

III C. Her madness seems strangely aggravated.

I C. Yes, for her cheeks are finely flushed, and her eyes in a frenzied sparkle.

(CASSANDRA enters wildly flustered.)

CASSANDRA. O my people, hearken ere the coming of the dreadful day; for horror and destruction are harboring in your midst!

I C. Yes, a beautiful horror like thyself.

II C. And destruction of good cheer.

CASSAND. Oh! why are you stony hearted? Why

spurn you the words of prophecy with mockery? O my people, come to your senses and take understanding! for vain is all your sacrifice and prayer if you heed not the voice of divine counsel.

III C. Ah, bah! cease thy babble.

II C. Yes, go, CASSANDRA, cry to thy temple-walls, they have more patience than we.

I C. Not so; for they even mock her to an echo. (*Laughter.*)

CASSND. O APOLLO, thou hast cursed me as only a god can curse! for I see doom like an avalanche sweeping down on my beloved, and, like one in a dream, am powerless to avert it. Ah, woe is me! woe is me! (*With that she hastens away.*)

(*The noise of an approaching multitude has slowly grown louder, and seems now closely at hand. Enter the royal pageant and the people in general. When all have taken their respective places, PRIAM arises and addresses them.*)

PRIAM. My people and ye princes: since we paid due honors to the gods, we will now begin the race in the dusty course, for which we have set the prizes as follows:—first—a woman in the bloom of youth, skilled with the needle and for labor at the loom; also a vase of twenty measures capacity, adorned with brightly polished handles:—second—a mare unbroke and big with a mule:—third—a shining charger that holds four ample measures:—two golden talents shall be the fourth:—and the last, an ample bowl. You see that the prizes are exceptional,

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and worthy of the highest excellence. (*To HECTOR.*)
Cast the lot for the preferred places, HECTOR.

(*When the casting of the lot is done, HECTOR calls out the result.*)

HECTOR. MESTOR leads; ANTIPHON is next; POLITES, third; HYPOTHOUS, fourth; and PARIS, last.

(*MESTOR's good fortune is greeted with loud applause by the masses, with whom he seems a general favorite. Each contestant rushes out as his name is called, eager to mount his chariot.*)

HECTOR. (*Taking his stand beside his father.*)
Are you ready?—Go.

(*All the noises of a starting race, such as the lashing of scourges, the coaching of the drivers, and the rumbling of chariot—wheels, are heard, and slowly diminish as by growing distance.*)

PRIAM. That was an excellent start; they pulled out like one man.

HECTOR. MESTOR seems easily to take the lead.

PRIAM. But, see, how closely the young stranger is pressing him.

HECTOR. That matters little as yet, since neither one has put his steeds to their mettle.

PRIAM. But they are warming up, for PARIS is gaining—yes, is in the advance.

HECTOR. Truly. But, lo! he has lost his scourge now, and his steeds are slackening pace.

HERA. (*Aside.*) Good! PALLAS, therein I see thy hand.

HECTOR. MESTOR is at the front again. (*An en-*

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thusiastic shout from the crowd.) What, can I believe mine eyes! PARIS has regained his lash and is now almost speeding again head to head with MESTOR. Alas! (*A general cry of pity from the masses.*)

HECUBA. (*Arising.*) What happened, HECTOR?

HECTOR. MESTOR's car broke from the yoke and hurled him headlong into the dust.

HECUBA. My son! my son! O tell me that he is not harmed.

HECTOR. He lies motionless. His steeds, as if conscious of their master's plight, have come to a sudden halt. Ah! thanks be to the gods! he bestirs himself, so cannot be seriously injured. Look, ANTIPHON is trying to overtake PARIS.

PRIAM. That is not possible; for PARIS is too far in the lead. If he is not careful he will hardly come in second, for POLITES is gaining on him considerably.

HECTOR. True, POLITES is making an intense effort. Yet now they are approaching to where the wintry torrent has torn a gulch in the course; unless POLITES will stay his steeds, he'll bring ruin on both. Ah, the furious youth, he presses ANTIPHON to the brink! But, no, ANTIPHON, more generous and wise, restrains his steeds and yields him the way.

AGED DIGNITARY. Is it by me alone discerned, HYPOTHOUS is coming in second. Yes, it is he, I know him by the moon of shining white upon his steed's brow,—it is HYPOTHOUS!

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ANOTHER, somewhat younger. Old man, of those who view the race neither the sharpest eyed nor youngest, yet the readiest to decide and confer the prize; POLITES is coming in second, for I know him by his shape, his air.

AGED DIGNITARY. Thou art of an arrogant tongue; yet a goblet or tripod will I stake on my assertion.

PRIAM. Forbear you Elders; much would you blame others thus vilely to contend. Besides, the approaching steeds your contest now decide.

(A chariot is heard approaching, and PARIS, throwing the reins to an attendant, leaps on the stage. He is coldly received by all but PRIAM and HECUBA, who applaud him generously. Another chariot approaches and POLITES enters in the same way, but is more generally applauded. Next appears ANTIPHON, and then HYPOTHOS. At last MESTOR, bruised and dusty, comes on the stage, and is greeted with a wild furor of applause.)

PRIAM. *(After the enthusiasm had somewhat subsided.)* Behold him, though the last, whose skill surpasses them all. Therefor, since Fortune wrongfully denies, let us in justice award him the second honors of the day. *(An expression of large satisfaction by the masses.)*

POLITES. Nay, father, think not that I will thus tamely resign my prize. As long as I was favored by the gods, I demand my due, and my allotted mare will not forego.

ANTIPHON. POLITES, hast thou the audacity thus

boldly to proclaim the mare thy honest due, when thou positively knowest that thy eager wish to conquer, not to circumvent, defrauded me thereof. Stand forth and on thy oath vindicate thy claim if thou darest.

POLITES. Forgive me, brother, I admit to have erred; my eagerness to conquer urged me to take an undue advantage. Yet I quit the prize or aught else thou askest, if thou wilt forgive me my offense.

ANTIPHON. Thus, my brother, may our differences be ever adjusted. A rash heat may momentarily impel but never break the settled temper of a noble soul. Thy confession has already annulled thy offense. Therefor I embrace thee, more pleased to have regained esteem for my brother than to have been foremost in the race.

HERA. (*Stepping forward.*) I can no longer stand silently by and see rascality triumph. For here you are wrangling about a minor prize, while the first honors remain undisputed in fraudulent hands.

SEVERAL. What! No! How!

HERA. Have you no eyes—no sense of the probability of things?

ANTIPHON. What doest thou mean?

POLITES. Yes, speak plainer.

SEVERAL. Speak plainer! Speak plainer!

HERA. How is it possible but for a moment to suppose that, without resorting to undue means, ap-

proved skill could be thus easily outdone by a crude, uncouth herdsman?

SEVERAL. Ah! Ah!

HERA. Are your eyes opening? Do you see?

SEVERAL. We have been duped! He is a fraud!

HERA. Yes, you have been duped—you were imposed upon by a cunning-souled pretender.

SEVERAL. (*Making a rush toward PARIS.*) The knave! Flay him! kill him!

PRIAM. Hold! You shall not harm him on a mere suspicion. Let MESTOR speak; if there is anything wrong in the matter, he surely ought to know.

SEVERAL. Let MESTOR speak! Let MESTOR speak!

MESTOR. Truly, I hardly know what to say. But since my attention has been called to it, I must admit that there is something strange about the matter; for, just when I had the advantage of him, on a straight course, without any visible obstruction, my car seemed to be suddenly wrenched from its yoke, and I was hurled headlong into the dust.

HERA. Not that alone; but the mysterious way he regained his lash, after losing it, I think most conclusively proves that there is something villainous behind it all.

SEVERAL. True! True! The fraud! Flay him! Kill him! (*With that the whole mob rushes at PARIS, who, growing fearful, takes to flight.*)

HERA. Behold, he flees! guilt is at his heels.

SEVERAL. Let him not escape! Catch him! Trap

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him! (*With that the mob chases after PARIS. Enter APHRODITE.*)

APHR. (*Calling after the mob.*) Hold, hold, I say!

HERA. (*Laughing mockingly.*) Thou mightest as well call to the abandoned winds, as to an infuriated mob.

APHR. I know it. Yet it is not for them that I called, but in mockery of thee.

HERA. What doest thou mean?

APHR. Thou shalt see. (*With that she makes directly toward the portico where PRIAM and HECUBA, intensely interested, are gazing after the mob and hold the following conversation.*)

HECUBA. Have they overtaken him yet?

PRIAM. No; he is fleet as a doe, and outruns them all.

HECUBA. The gods be thanked for that!

PRIAM. It seems thou takest a warm interest in the youth?

HECUBA. I know not why, but my heart goes out toward him.

PRIAM. It is strange; I also took kindly to him from the very first, or should never have accorded him the privilege that I did.

APHR. (*Approaching them.*) Most gracious sovereign, may I presume to a momentary audience?

PRIAM. Speak, I will attend.

APHR. Stirrs not a fatherly feeling in thy bosom for him who yonder flees a vile pursuit?

PRIAM. What doest thou mean? Thy words are veiled in mystery to me.

APHR. I mean that yonder fleeing youth is thy son whom, in mere superstition, thou hast wrongfully cast out to die when but an infant.

HECUBA. (*Growing excited.*) Ah, now I can interpret my feelings for the youth! Yes, father, it is our son; for in all his form and manner I recognize thee newly transfigured as when first thou camest to woo my love.

PRIAM. Not so hastily, wife, I pray thee. We cannot take the mere word of a stranger as a warrant of fact in a matter of such moment.

APHR. It was not expected that you should; for a peculiar cluster of molds at the base of his neck will attest the truth of my assertion beyond a doubt.

HECUBA. Yes, father, we all observed it at his birth, and its peculiarity stirred our wonder. O come, lest they kill him—come ere it be too late.

PRIAM. But how could he have been delivered from the fate to which he was exposed?

APHR. A passing herdsman discovered him by his cry, and in pity took him home and reared him as his own.

PRIAM. Yet if he is to be the curse of Troy, as the soothsayers foretold, it were better that he should die even now.

APHR. Surely, thou wouldst not rid thyself of him so willfully as to put faith in a prophecy that has been proven false by time.

PRIAM. How can I understand thee?

APHR. Why, it is already two years beyond the period when ruin should have befallen Troy if he would live.

PRIAM. Ah, true, it never dawned on me in that light. (*To HECUBA.*) Come, wife, let us hasten, these last words are conclusive.

HECUBA. Yes, let us hasten. (*Exeunt PRIAM, HECUBA, and the court in general.*)

APHR. (*To HERA, on her way out.*) Thou beholdest that I have little fear of thee and thine. (*Exit APHRODITE.*)

HERA. Impudence is ever the last resource of baffled minds. And yet—her assured manner somewhat imposes on me. If it is as she would make believe, I must admit that I am nearly at my wit's end. But no—no, my master stroke is as yet to be played. By denouncing him the curse of Troy, I will bug-bear the people into working us vengeance. Yet how proceed? I have it! I will put HECTOR, who is of large prestige with the people, with some telling pretext out of the way; that done, PALLAS may impersonate him and effectively help me arouse the mob against PARIS, and thus secure the fulfillment of our purpose at last. Ah, APHRODITE, thou shalt find that we are still to be reckoned with!

CURTAIN

ACT III

In the temple of Apollo

*Dramatic personages of the third act:—*PRIAM. PARIS. HYPOTHUS. MESTOR. ANTIPHON. POLITES. HECUBA. OENONE. CASSANDRA. HERA. PALLAS, as HECTOR. Virgins of the temple. The mob.

SCENE. *Interior of the temple of APOLLO. To the left, which represents the rear of the temple, a sacrificial altar; to the right, which represents the front, an entrance of noble masonry. At the foot of the altar, a gong and various other sanctuary implements.*

(CASSANDRA, in a dejected attitude, is at the altar. Her choir of white-robed virgins is about her. OENONE sits lowly cowered at the base of a large pillar.)

CHOIR

O thou light-bringer of the world,
Unto whose eye of ardent might
All nature's beauties are unfurled
And broaden to a far delight;
O thou who love and song instills
And fillest all with vital throb,

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Bar from her vision fated ills,
And ease the burden of her sob!

All beings joy within thy smile,
But she is bound to anguish deep;
Hope may no more her heart beguile,
And lend her fancy buoyant sweep:
For like a grape the grief of years
Is pressed unto her lip, and she
Must taste the bitterness of tears
And sorrows that are yet to be.

Oh, be not thou relentless! bar
The future's vistas from her eyes;
Let each day's onward speeding car
Bear its own fill of woes and sighs:
For mortal might is far too weak
To cope against invidious fate.
O PHEOBUS, grant us what we seek,
And give her back her native state.

*(When they have done, all pass out at the rear
and leave CASSANDRA and OENONE alone.)*

CASSAND. (*Arousing.*) O glorious One! thou, before whom the Hours ever circle in rhythmic joy, and the world awakes to fragrant beauty, look with compassion on my grief and in mercy lift thy curse from me that I may avert this fated horror from my people! O HELIOS, hear me, thy priestess calls!
. . . Alas, thou art vengeful, and unrelent-

ingly silent!—harder than a flint is thy heart to the cry of distress! . . . Still, what is this? The veil is lifting from my inner sight and I behold a wild commotion on the festive grounds. . . . The people have arisen against him.—

OENONE. (*Interrupting her, anxiously.*) Against whom, CASSANDRA?

CASSAND. (*Emphatically.*) Against PARIS, the curse of Troy.

OENONE. (*Arising.*) Alas!

CASSAND. He has taken to flight. . . . they are pursuing him . . . yet he outruns them with a triple-winged swiftness. Ah! he seeks his way hither—hither to the altar of the god, hoping thereat to find protection. O HELIOS, is this thy answer to my prayer? . . . Yes, yes, for the gods speak in opportunities. So come, my fair young bullock, come, the sacrificial altar stands prepared for thee; since my words avail nothing, I will take to deeds. (*With that she picks up a knife from the altar, and secretes it in her bosom.*)

OENONE. What, thou wouldst not kill him?

CASSAND. Alas, that it must be my duty! But the welfare of the world demands it, and in that case mercy for the one were a crime to the many.

OENONE. But thou shalt not, for it is even he whom I love.

CASSAND. No, child!

OENONE. Yes. It is he whom I followed hither, and in whose mere shadow I could live with joy.

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CASSAND. O OENONE, how grievously thy words burden my already all too sadly laden heart. For know, I too love him—love him with a sister-love so fond and deep that I fear but to look at him might weaken me in my purpose. But no, it shall not; I am awakened to my duty now and unswervingly will act to the wisdom of a higher understanding.

OENONE. Ah, frantic woman, hearken what I say: while I live, thou shalt not touch a hair of his head.

CASSAND. Child, thou art mad.

OENONE. I care not what I am; I only know that he is all my life, all my hope, and in my struggle for these will recognize no odds.

CASSAND. Ah, blinded fury of love, that in the face of endless woe seekest a short-lived, selfish happiness!

OENONE. Nay, it is not selfish; I could sacrifice all the world for him, but would not sacrifice him for all the world.

CASSAND. O love, how intricate are thy meshes! how unfathomable is thy law! the reason can only behold them with impotent wonder. (*To OENONE.*)

OENONE, thou knowest not how deeply I grieve for thee.

OENONE. Oh, I knew thou wouldst relent—I knew thou wouldst have compassion.

CASSAND. Yet think not because my heart is touched with human pity, that I will forego my purpose. Nay; learn from me that the divinity of the affections lies in the supremacy of the mind.

OENONE. Wouldst thou teach me, the godly born?

CASSAND. Be not boastful; for unless by thy own free will thou canst lift thyself into the empyrean of divine illumination, wherein the all-embracing principle of righteousness gleameth like the all-permeating sun, thou art no better than the worm under thy foot.

OENONE. Thou speakest fantastically, and wouldst but justify thy cruel will.

CASSAND. If of two evils it were cruel to choose the lesser, my will would be cruel indeed.

OENONE. Thou hast no heart—no tender womanly feeling.

CASSAND. Ah, would that I had not; but therein even lies my grief.

OENONE. Wilt thou not deign me then a word of hope?

CASSAND. No; for I would not stoop to delusion that maketh a mockery of grief.

OENONE. Thou art mad, and the people do well to spurn thee.

CASSAND. Rail, child, rail at me in the anguish of thy heart, I can forgive the rancor of despair.

OENONE. Oh, CASSANDRA, do but spare him for me, and I will be grateful to thee forever.

CASSAND. My poor OENONE, have peace; struggle only sets the cruel talons of necessity more deeply in the heart. Yet he approaches, his heavy panting is already in mine ear. Courage, sister, courage; know our sorrows die with their day, but a worthy

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act grows through the ages to a myriad-blossomed joy.

(OENONE throws herself despairingly, face downward, beside the altar; while CASSANDRA takes up a net and, secreting it under the folds of her gown stands awaiting PARIS, who, after a few moments, rushes in heavily panting, and embraces the altar.)

CASSAND. So thou hast come, O hapless one?

PARIS. Ay, hapless indeed, he who must flee to the altar of the gods for protection.

CASSAND. And yet from the altar of the gods, which is the altar of sacrifice, must ever come the world's salvation.

PARIS. Thy words are a mystery to me.

CASSAND. Thou shalt soon understand them, (*with that she throws the net over him and binds him perfectly helpless.*) for thy life is even forfeited to that end.

PARIS. (*In terror.*) Surely, thou wouldst not kill me?

CASSAND. Thou shalt die; for thus only can the evil be averted that thou art fated to bring over ILIUM.

PARIS. Alas, then I was blindly beguiled to destruction! O OENONE, OENONE, would that I had hearkened to thee and spurned the treacherous gods!

CASSAND. PARIS, behold in me thy sister.

PARIS. My sister! Ah, then thou merely playest with my fears?

CASSAND. Alas, though that were the utmost cruel-

ty, I would thou spakest true. Yet hearken, PARIS: I have large knowledge of coming events, and see, if thou livest, that thou shalt be the cause of a great calamity to TROY. Therefor, I beg of thee, sacrifice thyself willingly for the general welfare, and make a virtue of death.

PARIS. Thou art mad, and ravest wildly.

CASSAND. Ah, I see there is no understanding in the human heart beyond its own desire.

PARIS. Let me part in peace, I pray, for I fear thee.

CASSAND. PARIS, think me not mad because I see farther and pursue higher ends than are common to mortals.

PARIS. O would that I had given myself over to the mob rather than fall into thy clutches.

CASSAND. PARIS, I have prayed to the gods for guidance in this matter, and in answer they have delivered thee into my hands: therefore it is ordained that thou shalt die.

OENONE. (*Arising.*) But he shall not die.

PARIS. (*Surprised.*). OENONE!

CASSAND. Away with thee.

OENONE. No, I will not away. I was in hope that thou mightest be merely fanciful, and upon the immediate facing of thy contemplated deed wouldst perchance relent, but since thou seemest determined to accomplish it, I will restrain thee with might.

CASSAND. Hark! the mob is approaching and will soon be here. Unless I fulfill my purpose now, they

may take the possibility out of my hands forever.
Away, woman!

OENONE. Never! Never! (*With that they fall to grappling with each other. After a little OENONE gets the upper-hand, and, wresting the knife from CASSANDRA, hastens to PARIS and cuts his bonds.*)
Now flee, PARIS, flee for thy life.

(*When CASSANDRA perceives herself baffled, she hastens to the gong and strikes it violently. Her choir of virgins, in answer to her call, streams in from the rear of the temple at the same time that the pursuers of PARIS pour in at the front.*)

SEVERAL. Here he is! Here he is!

CASSAND. Yes, here he is—here he is, the curse of TROY! O ye men of ILIUM, if you love your sons, if you love your daughters, if you love yourselves, city, king, now is the time to show it; for at this very time their fate is heavy in your hands. Delay not, but seize him, slay him, crush him like a viper that has raised its fang against your beloved.

I CITIZEN. It seems she would really incite us to a sacrilegious action.

II C. Yes, and thus make us liable to the anger of the gods.

III C. And bring upon us the destruction she so frantically predicts.

I C. We dare not lay hand on him now.

II C. No; he is under the protection of the gods.

III C. Come, let us depart.

SEVERAL. Yes, let us depart.

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HERA. (*Stepping to the front.*) Men of ILIUM, are you entirely senseless? Will you determinately close your eyes to a hovering menace? Listen to me, and remember that I know whereof I am speaking. Yes, it is even as your prophetess says: he, (*pointing to PARIS,*) the curse of TROY, whom the gods warned you of when yet in the mother's womb, has reappeared among you to fulfill the dire fate that clings to his being.

I C. What speaketh he of?

II C. I know not.

III C. Methinks he refereth to the son of our king, who in infancy was cast out to die because his mother dreamed just before his birth that she was to be delivered of a burning torch.

I C. I believe I heard my father speak of that.

III C. O, it is a far recounted tale.

I C. But was not the child duly disposed of?

III C. Yes.

I C. Then why should he refer to that?

SEVERAL. Yes, why should he refer to that?

HERA. I will tell you why: because the Fates, determined on their purpose, delivered him into the hands of a herdsman, who brought him up as his own.

I C. That gives the matter a different aspect.

III C. Yes. If that be the case we should take no odds; for, surely it cannot be a trifling matter, or he would not have been disposed of before. Come, let us do away with him.

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SEVERAL. Let us do away with him! Let us do away with him!

(With that they throng toward PARIS, who stands at the altar still, with OENONE cowering fearfully at his feet. At this moment HECUBA hastily enters.)

HECUBA. Hold! hold! do not dare to lay a hand on him, for he is my long lost son.

HERA. Nay, tarry not; but onward, for now he is even proclaimed beyond a doubt.

SEVERAL. Yes, let us do away with him. *(They throng forward again.)*

HECUBA. *(Working her way through the mob till she stands protectingly before PARIS.)* Hold, hold, I say, it is your queen that commands.

SEVERAL. He is a menace to us all! He is the curse of TROY.

HECUBA. Fools! fools! is it under that delusion you are laboring? Yet why should I blame you, when I myself have been imposed upon by it. But, ah! how sadly did I rue it all these years, how bitterly have I regretted that I permitted my child to be sacrificed for the augury of a mere dream—a vain phantasm of the fevered blood. Yet the Heavens were kinder to my boy than his own mother, and preserved him to this day.

HERA. Heed her not, it is the mother's heart that is speaking out of her. You know the truth, and to the determination with which you act thereto alone you shall own your salvation.

HECUBA. Who is he that dares thus openly in-

cite you against your Queen? By what manner has he so suddenly endeared himself to you that he may with impunity assail her who has been your life-long friend and mediator? Alas, that after all these years I should live to have this come over me! (*Weeps softly.*)

II C. She weeps.

I C. Perhaps we wrong her.

II C. Surely, she always willed us well.

I C. I think we better let the matter rest.

HERA. (*Stepping up energetically.*) Ye men of ILIUM, are you mere feathers in the wind, servile to every momentary impulse, void of constancy and intelligent purpose? Know you not the weight of seasonable action? Have you no sense of the timely moment? Neglect your opportunity and in vain you will seek to recall it. What can you be waiting for? Surely the indications of the heavenly will are sufficiently clear for immediate action. Nay, be no laggards; but go you foreward, brush every obstacle aside, and accomplish to your better recognition.

I C. He speaks a likely word.

III C. I think we ought to look to our own good.

II C. If we don't, no one else will.

III C. Let us have done with this affair.

(*The crowd is in commotion at the entrance. Enter PRIAM.*)

SEVERAL. The king! the king! make way for the king!

(*The crowd makes way, and PRIAM passes to the*

front and places himself besides HECUBA and PARIS.)

PRIAM. Ye men of ILIUM, know you whom we have here?

SEVERAL. Yes, yes! Thy ill-fated son! The curse of TROY!

PRIAM. Ah, I see you have already been informed. Yet hearken to me, and mark my words: was there ever a time when your welfare was not foremost in my consideration?

SEVERAL. No! No!

PRIAM. Is there one among you who can truthfully say that my interests were ever for a moment permitted to stand opposed to yours?

SEVERAL. No! No! No!

PRIAM. Then let me tell you, that as readily as I condemned this my son when I believed him a menace to you, even so readily do I now reclaim him. It is already two years beyond the period prophesied when havoc should have befallen us if he would live; and here he is, hale and hearty, and ILIUM stands more proud and prosperous to-day than ever.

SEVERAL. True! True!

PRIAM. Therefor, since this proves beyond a doubt that the dream of the queen-mother must have been wrongly interpreted, it were the utmost folly to destroy a life, and especially one which, against many odds, has revealed itself today of such glorious promise. So, trusting that you will take reason, I now bid you all to follow me unto the palace, there to finish

our interrupted festivities and give thanks and praise to the gods for the safe-keeping and return of this my son. Come, I pray you all to follow me.

ALL. Hail, hail to our king! Long live the prince!
CASSAND. Father, mother, I pray you, do not despise the words of one who loves you; but take warning, and house not destruction in wilfull blindness.

PRIAM. CASSANDRA, I know thou meanest well, but thou art cursed with an all too fretful solicitude. I pray thee, intrude no longer on our patience. (*To the people.*) Come, my people.

CASSAND. (*Approaching her mother.*) Thou, O mother, thou, who hast ever been my ideal of truth and virtue, wilt at least hearken to me.

HECUBA. Child, I pity thee, and would that I could relieve thee of those wild ravings that make thee a public mockery and almost astrange thee from the heart of thy mother. (*With that she follows her husband, who had already proceeded out of the temple with PARIS and the several princes, and the mob closes in behind her. At the same time that they pass out at the front, the choir of virgins passes out at the rear. OENONE, apparently follows the virgins, yet suddenly glides into a niche and there hides herself. HERA and CASSANDRA remain alone.*)

CASSAND. O thou, more than man, to whom the truth is revealed even as to myself, help—help me save my people from the horrible fate that threatens them.

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HERA. Have peace, CASSANDRA, we will rid ourselves of him yet.

CASSANDRA. How were that possible?

HERA. Go, follow the princes and as inobtrusively as thou mayest persuade them to return hither.

CASSAND. But they will not heed me.

HERA. I am confident that they will; for I read a mistrustful disposition toward their newly found brother in their manner.

CASSAND. Whatever may be accomplished, that I will do. (*Exit CASSAN.*)

HERA. (*Calling out.*) PALLAS! (*Enter PALLAS, as HECTOR.*) Ah, thy impersonation is faultless, thou art HECTOR beyond a doubt. Now, since I have seen thee, thou canst go again; yet when the princes have returned, be sure to reappear opportunely.

PALLAS. I am almost losing heart of our repeated failures, and fear that thy hopes in the efficiency of my assumed personality will fall short of realization.

HERA. That is impossible. Thou knowest that the people are largely obtuse to reason and lack in positive discernment. Therefor, by the personality of HECTOR, who is of large prestige with them, I intend to glide into their sympathy and thus easily sway them to our purpose. Yet go, methinks I hear the princes approach. (*Exit PALLAS, at the rear. Enter CASSANDRA and the princes at the front.*) MESTOR, ANTIPHON, POLITES, HYPOTHUS, ay, and I would I

could say, HECTOR, I must have a word with you.

MESTOR. Well, let us hear.

ANTIPHON. If it be on this recent matter, it were useless.

PALLAS. (*Who had entered just in time to overhear the last remark.*) It must not be so, brothers.

ALL. (*In surprise.*) HECTOR!

MESTOR. You returned?

PALLAS. Yes, when some distance on my way, I reconsidered the matter and became so impressed with its importance that I could not help but retrace my steps. Brothers, we must take a decisive stand against our parents; in a case of such moment the holiest affection should be disregarded, and reason alone permitted to speak.

ANTIPHON. Then thou believest the prophecy true?

PALLAS. Why, who could be so senseless as to doubt it.

CASSAND. Ah, HECTOR, let me embrace thee for these words; they are thine, surely, by divine illumination.

HERA. At last, at last the truth has found a champion.

ANTIPHON. Pray, who art thou that interestest thyself so largely in this affair?

CASSAND. Alas! are you so dull of apprehension as not to perceive that a superior being is in your midst? (*The princes break out in an ironic laughter.*) O thou impoverished humanity, calloused to the core in

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all the finer senses that broaden being unto the divine!

HERA. Surely, man does not comprehend divinity; he can imagine it only as a far off etherial naught, while it really must be of immediate contact and vital touch. Yet let that pass; I seek to be known to you only by results, not by name.

PALLAS. Brothers, what better credentials could you desire?

HERA. Having your welfare sincerely at heart, I found it vain to appeal to a love-blinded parent, so put my hope for truthful recognition in your youthful, unwarped minds.

ANTIPHON. Of what use is our truthful recognition as long as we cannot persuade our parent thereto?

HYPOTHUS. Yes, and he is so ensconced behind the righteous temper of his soul, that all we may say beats into his ear merely as so much wind.

HERA. Then I will tell you how to proceed in the matter without him. Listen: (*They put their heads together, and HERA whispers something to them.*)

MESTOR. (*Shrinking back.*) Poison?

HERA. Yes, poison. While the festive hilarity runs high, a well-filled bowl will end it all.

ANTIPHON. Nay, we will not stoop to such cowardly means.

HERA. Cowardly! thou mistakest the word. It is

not that we fear other measure, no; we merely choose this as the wisest under the circumstances.

PALLAS. It is not well to be too scrupulous in a matter like this; the main thing is that it shall be done. And done it must be; for this intruder already seems to carry a favoritism that is liable to make us mere appendages to his glorification.

CASSAND. Fie, brother! Can these be the words of HECTOR, he whom the Youth of TROY patterns after for nobility? Fie, I say again, to taint our cause with a selfish motive. Thus the holiest purpose is turned sacrilegious, and I withdraw my hand from the action.

HERA. Nay, CASSANDRA, that was but a blundering word—a mere outburst of unsanctioned feeling. And though it were otherwise, it should not turn thee from a worthy purpose: for a good cause stands inviolable and cannot be tainted by an unqualified hand. The guilt of whatsoever offence done in its name, ever reverts unto the doer. Yet, we are idling away precious moments. If by this time we are not assured of the necessity of imperious action, we had better drop the matter and let events take their natural course. So let me hear who is willing to serve in administering the potion? (*No one responds.*) What, no response? Truly, counsel profits Man but little; pain and sorrow can be his only teacher: therefor mishap stretches to endless recurrence, and woe is the heirloom of the world! Ah, it is not possible that you can be laggards in a matter that con-

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cerns you so intimately. Remember, the fate of your kingdom, your people, yourselves depends on this, and let me hear an answer.

CASSAND. I offer myself for the task.

HERA. Thou, CASSANDRA? Nay, I fear to accept thee; thy approach might arouse suspicion.

CASSAND. Fear not, I shall know how to trim myself to their humor.

HERA. Very well then. Are you all satisfied that CASSANDRA should serve?

ALL. We are.

HERA. Yet let it be understood that each one, aside from this, in his own sphere, is to forward and secure the success of our venture as much as possible. Come, while CASSANDRA prepares herself for the task, let us away and see how things have proceeded. (*While they pass out at the front of the temple, CASSANDRA vanishes in its rear. When they are all gone, OENONE comes forward.*)

OENONE. Oh, PARIS, PARIS, would that thou hadst never roved from the peaceful haunts of our love. Death and havoc hover about the path of ambition, and envy and malice is in the rivalry of men. Ah, how shall I be able to save thee from the treachery of these vengeful goddesses, how measure my strength with their seemingly inexhaustible cunning? Yet I must not dishearten, and thus deprive the little power that I have of efficiency. No, I must bear up bravely and outwit their hate at every turn. And when I have my PARIS again—have him again, sati-

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ated and disgusted with this larger world, how proudly will I walk from hence and be content forevermore. But now away; I must be watchful, for vigilance is more than might.

CURTAIN

ACT IV

Courtyard of the Palace

*Dramatic personages of the fourth act:—*PRIAM.
PARIS. MESTOR. ANTIPHON. POLITES. HY-
POTHOU. HEMEROS. HECUBA. OENONE. CAS-
SANDRA. HERA. PALLAS, as HECTOR. APHRO-
DITE. THE MOB.

SCENE. *A high wall with an archway, closed by a gate, in the rear; an artistic entrance into the palace, to the right; and a massive bench-like seat, set on a stone elevation, to the left.*

(Noises of a festively abandoned multitude are occasionally heard, and the gleam of bonfires may be seen over the wall, mirrored in the nightly sky. PALLAS, MESTOR, ANTIPHON, POLITES, and HYPOTHOU to one side.)

PALLAS. Brothers, take my word for it, this mysterious stranger is some qualified personage, and, as CASSANDRA intimated, perchance a god in disguise. I think we ought to appreciate his efforts in our behalf, and assist him to the utmost.

ANTIPHON. That is all well enough, but it is a wretched matter to go against one's own flesh and blood.

PALLAS. Why, ANTIPHON, thou speakest like a

child. This life is principally a battling for the general welfare, and where that is concerned everything else should be of a secondary consideration.

MESTOR. HECTOR speaks true.

HYPOTHOUS. Yes, and from what I can see, HECTOR spoke true before also.

ANTIPHON. In what regard?

HYPOTHOUS. In that we are liable to be nothing but mere appendages to his glorification.

POLITES. Yes. Mother seems to have but eyes for him, and father ever harps his praises.

HYPOTHOUS. Not that alone: but the fullness of the land is given to the people to feast and riot in his honor, while we were ever stinted and held to parsimoniousness.

ANTIPHON. I do not like the manner of your speech; it breathes the soul of jealousy, and personal feelings color your reason.

PALLAS. That may seem so to thee, ANTIPHON; but I am convinced that HYPOTHOUS and POLITES merely indulge in that sort of talk to strengthen themselves in their larger purpose.

ANTIPHON. Let me tell thee, HECTOR, that in general personal feelings are the prime motive, and the larger purpose, as thou callest it, but an excuse to humor them.

PALLAS. ANTIPHON, thou speakest like one who is weakening in a resolve. Can there be any doubt in thy mind of the necessity of our contemplated action?

ANTIPHON. No; or I would never have pledged

myself to it. All I ask is that its dignity be preserved by a singleness of purpose.

PALLAS. If that be all, let us not bandy further words, but place every other matter subservient to our principle aim. (*A shout, like that of the masses cheering PARIS, is heard from without.*) Hear the menials! erst they were at his heels like bloodhounds, and now they are shouting his praises.

HYPOTHOUS. Thinkest thou not, HECTOR, since the people favor him so largely now, that if they found us instrumental in bringing about his death they might deal harshly with us?

PALLAS. That is a timely word. I almost think it advisable for one of us to go among the people and with cunning insinuations bring them to favor, yes, and if need be, help the fulfillment of our purpose.

POLITES. Thinkest thou it possible to accomplish that?

PALLAS. Possible! why anything is possible with a mob. There is generally so much light tinder among it that the merest spark will set it fantastically ablaze.

ANTIPHON. HECTOR, I must say that I scarcely recognize thee in thy zeal for this matter; though thy face and figure are the same, there seems to be a something foreign in the context of thy speech.

PALLAS. Let that not surprise thee, ANTIPHON; for one intense emotion may change the entire composition of our souls. But what thinkest thou of my proposition?

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ANTIPHON. I think it a good forethought, and also deem thee well fitted to serve to that end.

PALLAS. The matter is already attended to. The stranger is among the people, awakening them to their danger, and secretly influencing them to come into sympathy with our cause. I merely took this round—about way to inform you thereof, that you might be more fully impressed with his unusual wisdom and circumspection.

(The gate is opened, and PRIAM, HECUBA, and PARIS enter.)

PRIAM. For shame, my sons, that, instead of you seeking us, we must come to you to have you share in our happiness. Pray, tell me, why are you so dark and secluded? What grievance harbor you against us?

MESTOR. I pray thee, father, permit us to indulge our mood.

PRIAM. I would, and gladly, thought I it not a blind, unwarranted feeling against our joy.

MESTOR. And if it were so, we could still but bide its season.

PRIAM. Alas, that my own children should be less tractable to my wishes than the people at large!

MESTOR. That only proves that our sincerity is above the bribery of self-interest, and sustains itself even against our love.

HECUBA. I pray thee, husband, let us not foster wordy quarrel. It cannot be expected that our sons should take as readily to their newly-found broth-

er as thou and I, who have yearned and mourned for him all these years. Come, let us joy as best we can; I know that PARIS with his personal affability will soon win his way to their hearts.

PARIS. Yes, brothers—brothers, let me know in truth the sweetness of that word, that ere this but haunted my fancy. I pray you, keep yourselves not aloof from me, nor fear that I shall be boorishly cumbersome to you: nay, though reared among herdsmen and common rustics, the instinct of my royal birth clung to me and kept me from what was vulgar in their manner. I beg of you, let us be friends; here is my hand to it.

(No one makes a move to accept the proffered hand.)

PRIAM. For shame, my sons! If any one could say that I refused the proffered hand of my worst enemy, I should consider myself irredeemably dishonored. For shame, I say again!

MESTOR. Father, we know and admire thy generous spirit, but are unable to emulate it in our present state of mind.

PRIAM. Go to; you are an ungrateful, niggardly set, and begrudge a brother rightful share in your princely heirloom.

MESTOR. Father!

PRIAM. Utter that word no more, for it sounds like a viper's hiss from thy lips.

HECUBA. I pray thee, husband, restrain thy anger, it is growing abusively violent.

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PRIAM. How should it not, when all the love and care I gave my children bears me such a bitter fruit.

HECUBA. But remember that unreasonable chastisement can only aggravate a vile distemper.

PRIAM. Truly, wife. (*To the princes.*) I crave your leniency, my sons. You see that even in age the blood's impetuosity needs to be guarded and all-distorting passion removed from the mind's eye. If you cannot see things in my light, you simply cannot, and I should only respect you for your honesty in saying so. We will leave matters as they are, and let time and mutual fairness smoothen out our differences. (*A great noise is heard without. To the gate keeper.*) What is that noise?

GATE K. (*After looking without.*) It is CASSANDRA, your Highness.

PRIAM. Doubtlessly making a public spectacle of herself again, as usual.

GATE K. (*Still looking without.*) She is coming hitherward followed by a large number of people.

PRIAM. What strange turn can her frenzy have taken now?

(*The noise of an approaching multitude draws nearer and nearer till it seems at the very gate. Out of the midst of the garrulous masses CASSANDRA issues into the courtyard.*)

CASSAND. Father, I have come to share in the feast thou hast prepared for thy recovered son.

PRIAM. CASSANDRA, how can I understand thy sudden change of mind?

HECUBA. Come to my heart, my child. This day is blessed indeed; for not only one, but two of my long lost have returned to me. (*She moves to embrace her.*)

CASSAND. (*Shrinking from her.*) Mother, embrace me not, at least—not yet.

HECUBA. Why child!

CASSAND. Alas! I pray thee, mark my manner not too closely: my long-accustomed, dark, unfriendly ways, but recently forsworn, hang yet confusing on my better will. Yet let me break their tyranny perforce—let me effect high merriment and launch on humor's blithest tide. Pray let us have some wine—wine, the stimulator of joyous fancy—wine, the harbinger of jovial commerce—wine, the god that glides into the pulses with fervant rapture and makes being a heaven of rosy cheer! Let us have some wine!

PRIAM. (*To a servant in waiting.*) Some wine. (*Exit servant.*)

CASSAND. (*To PARIS.*) Brother, I greet thee—(*Mysteriously,*) ay, welcome thee home. Believe me, I love thee—loved thee even when my hand was uplifted against thy life, and hope that thou wilt harbor no resentment against me.

PARIS. CASSANDRA, thou art the first of my brothers and sisters to welcome me home, which shall not only secure thee my forgiveness, but also an undying preference in my heart.

CASSAND. What, have they been so niggardly as

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that? For shame, my brothers! Why, the sacrificial bullock you would have welcomed with joyous shout to the altar, but a brother you embitter his fate.

HECUBA. Child, thy words fill me with terror.

PRIAM. CASSANDRA, what brought thee hither?

(Two servants enter; one passes about the wine bowls, and the other follows in his wake and fills them.)

CASSAND. Ah, well mayest thou ask, father, when my tongue thus wildly strays. I thought that I could play the hilarious Bachante at will, but find myself warped to my former practices beyond reversion. Yet let me have some wine; wine may dissolve the rigidity of habit and bring me back my pliancy of self. *(The one servant passes her a bowl, and the other fills it.) (To PARIS.)* Brother, to thee let us drink—to thee poor victim of an evil fate. *(While she says that she secretly drops some poison into her bowl.)*

THE PRINCES. Yes, let us drink.

PRIAM. Since thy manner seems so conducive to friendlier feelings among the princes, I also say—let us drink.

CASSANDRA. Yet, hold, brother. Ere thou drinkest, as a mark of mutual esteem, I pray thee to exchange bowls with me.

PARIS.. Gladly, sister, if it so pleases thee.

(CASSANDRA and PARIS exchange bowls.)

CASSAND. Here is to PARIS!

ALL. To PARIS.

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(During the last remarks OENONE is seen under the archway remonstrating with the gate-keeper to admit her; but as he refuses her, and the critical moment is at hand, she calls out from where she is.)

OENONE. Hold, hold, PARIS, thy cup is fraught with death!

PALLAS. She is a lying wench, bar—bar her out!

OENONE. O PARIS, do not drink, they are seeking thy life!

SEVERAL. Bar her out! Bar her out!

(The gate-keeper forcibly ejects OENONE and bars the gate on her.)

PRIAM. I believe the girl spoke the truth. There is a vile conspiracy here afoot.

PALLAS. Father, thou wilt not suspect us at the mere word of a disreputable wanton?

PRIAM. I will suspect all—all—till I have proof to the contrary.

PALLAS. What proof demandest thou?

PRIAM. Let him who is assured that the girl spoke a falsehood step forward and drain the suspicioned bowl. *(No one ventures forward.)* Ah, then it is true, and we are in a nest of treachery. Away with you all.

PALLAS. No, father; we must remain and even against thy will perform our duty.

PRIAM. Cowards you are—low minded menials that would bring their old father to grief.

ANTIPHON. No, father; it is thy good we are seeking; for we would secure thine age from desolation,

and from becoming a woeful spectator in the ruins of thy palaces.

PRIAM. Do not pretend to work on me again with those idle tales; I was their dupe once, but henceforth will spurn them beyond a shadow of belief.

PALLAS. Thy fatherly heart will not permit thee to recognize the truth; yet we have convinced ourselves, and are determined that he shall die.

MESTOR. Yes, father; for it were the utmost folly to take the odds of human doubt in the face of such a menace.

ALL. (*Moving toward PARIS with drawn swords.*)
He shall die! He must die!

PRIAM. Back, you ingrates.

HECUBA. Yes, back! since the savage beasts spared him for me, think not that he shall fall a prey to you, for I will protect him with my very life. Yet believe not, because I oppose you, that you are less dear to me than he. No, I bore you all under my heart and nursed you to a fair estate; but a mother must cling to her neediest child. Ah, sons, I can forgive CASSANDRA, knowing by what fury she is nettled, but you are inexcusably blameable. Yet why will I talk—why seek to awaken due regard and loving sentiment in you? If you have become so vile as to take arms against a helpless brother, you have fallen beyond all tender-souled appeal. Nay, I will speak no more. When a mother has lost faith in her children, death can be her sole relief. So come

—come, take your victim, but in mercy let it be over the lifeless body of your mother.

(They fall back abashed.)

CASSAND. O ye Powers malignant, what league have you struck with the human heart! Ah, brothers, be not daunted—let not sentiment and affection turn you from the path of truth and worthy purpose. Recognize that your salvation lies ever in the triumph of reason, and unflinchingly mind its dictates. Yet should you feel yourselves incapacitated personally to oppose the will of your parents, go you forth and appeal to the people, for where the individual is restrained they may proceed imperiously. Think not that it were cruel to urge the matter thus forcibly; no, your intention is for the best, and beyond that everything falls to the responsibility of the gods. So arouse ye, in such a cause but menials would delay.

PALLAS. Yes, CASSANDRA has knowing counsel, let us refer our cause to the people. *(A noise as that of a growling multitude has occasionally been heard ere this, but just then broke out with greater force immediately at the gate.)* Hark! they are already at the gate. *(She goes to the gate and throws it wide open, and, led by HERA, in stream the masses.)* Ye people, we are not your defense, no, you are ours. Though we may counsel and guide, you must fight the battles and overcome the besieging foe. You are aware what woe is destined to come over us by this our hapless brother. His very birth was so marked

with incident of dark portent, that seers and sages, wise in heavenly counsel, advised his death. Yet a determined fate delivered him from what was knowingly decreed and even this day brought him again among us to accomplish its malignant purpose. Remember, the gods never speak in vain, and their merest intimation should be a guidance to the wise. Unless you take up this matter energetically, the eve of a horrible fulfillment is at hand. So delay no longer, but with one bold action sweep this hovering menace from the horizon of your future.

SEVERAL. He shall die; he is a danger to us and our children.

PRIAM. Hear me!

HERA. Nay, hear him not; you know your duty, so—up and onward.

SEVERAL. Hear him not! Hear him not!

PRIAM. You must hear me.

SEVERAL. Hear him! Hear him!

OTHERS. Hear him not! Hear him not!

PRIAM. What, has it come to this?

SEVERAL. Hear him! Hear him!

HERA and PALLAS. Hear him not!

A LARGE NUMBER. Hear him not! Hear him not!

PRIAM. (*Pleadingly.*) Hear me! I your king begs of you, not commands.

QUITE A NUMBER. Hear him! Hear him!

PALLAS. Hear him not! Hold your footing, one moment of relaxation might prove fatal.

IN FULL VOLUME. Hear him! Hear him!

PRIAM. Ah, my people, more generous to me than my own children, if my son is a menace to you, let his life be forfeited: for the individual should hold no right beyond that of the Commonweal's. Yet, I think, since it must be, that I have been sufficiently deserving for you to proceed in this matter with as much regard for my feelings as possible. Therefor I pray you to withdraw a few moments, and with you take everyone here present, so as to allow the heart-broken parents a solitary farewell with the hapless victim of your delusion.

ALL. So be it! So be it!

HERA. Fools, fools, you know not what you are doing.

ALL. So be it! So be it! (*With that they close about everyone present, but PRIAM, HECUBA, and PARIS, and, willing or unwilling, sweep them in one throng out of the courtyard. When they are all out, PRIAM bars the gate after them.*)

HECUBA. Oh, what shall we do!

PARIS. Would that I had never roved from my mountain home.

PRIAM. Have no fear, my son, I'll save thee from them yet.

PARIS. If I could but escape I would never venture into their path again.

HECUBA. My lord, I bethought me of HEMEROS, whose bottom lies in port ready to sail for SPARTA; were it not possible to bid him hoist sail at once and take our son with him?

PRIAM. Wife, thou hast hit on my very plan. Go, call HEMEROS hither immediately; he is in the ante-chamber, anxiously awaiting orders to be off, as a northwind has risen and is blowing a prosperous gale. (HECUBA goes into the palace.) So, my son, thou art saved; and things culminate so nicely for thy departure as if it were the will of Heaven that thou shouldst go.

PARIS. Yet, father, finding me gone they might visit their wrath upon thee.

PRIAM. Fear not, son; I labored with the masses too much not to know how to take them. They are like a large, heavy-minded child, that one durst not oppose bluntly, but with due consideration may sway almost to any purpose. Yet think not from this that I despise them; nay, they have my innermost regard. Their will, beyond that of an idle, inflamed humor, constitutes the world's supreme authority. They are the prime resource of all human and divine potencies; and the great pivot on which the scale of universal justice ballances for equipoise.

PARIS. Yet, if I go, shall I never see thee again?

PRIAM. Yes, my son, after some time. When their fear of thee has subsided, and its foolhardiness become evident, thou shalt return, and I will prepare a royal welcome for thee. (*Enter HECUBA with HEMEROS.*) HEMEROS, be gone on thy voyage at once. Thou art aware how this my son is threatened by the unwarranted fear of the people, so I would have thee take him with thee and place him into the

care of our well esteemed friend of SPARTA, King MENELAUS. There is no space for further consideration now; my orders are—up, and away.

HEMEROS. Most gracious Sovereign, my reverence for thee knows but one word, and that is—obedience.

PRIAM. I knew I could depend on thee. (*To PARIS.*) Farewell, son; though but a few hours mine, thou hast grown dear to me as life.

HECUBA. Go, son, go though my heart almost breaks in telling thee so. Yet sacrifice is the virtue of love, and therein I shall find my solace when thou art gone.

PARIS. Farewell, mother. Farewell, father. (*He embraces both in turn.*)

PRIAM. There is no time to be lost, so now—away. Though the cloak of night is about you, you had better leave the palace by the postern-door joined to my closet by a blind gallery: it is well known to thee, HEMEROS. (*Exeunt PARIS and HEMEROS.*) (*When they are gone HECUBA falls weeping on her husband's breast.*) Have peace, wife, and let the balm of reason soothe thy grief.

HECUBA. Oh, I could bear everything were it not for the hatefulness our children manifested toward us to-day.

PRIAM. That is also my pang of bitterness. Yet let us not look too severely at their action. We all have our convictions, and according to the honesty with which we act to them alone can we be judged. By the light of our being, be it whatever it will, we

can only be held responsible. If they sinned it was, to all appearances, from a mistaken regard for our best, and, therefor, cannot be accounted against them. So let us be sensible, and not idly prolong the malice of a fortuitous occurrence; but with reason and leniency woo sweet concord back into the relations of our household.

HECUBA. Thou speakest wisely. But we women are poor creatures of unreasonable affection, and in the fullness of our sympathy more capable of giving than taking counsel. Yet I will cling to thee, and of thy kindness at least take comfort, if not redress.

(During this the mob had begun to manifest impatience without, and beat and pressed against the gate until it gave way. Enter mob with HERA, PALLAS, CASSANDRA, OENONE, and the princes mingled promiscuously among them.)

SEVERAL. *(After looking about.)* He is not here! He has escaped!

HERA. It is just as I told you; you have been duped.

SEVERAL. Where is he? We demand him from thy hand.

PRIAM. My people, rage and tear to pleasure, I have no fear. Though I feel it my duty to preserve and protect others when I see them wrongfully threatened by you, personally I shall ever commit myself to live or die by your will. *(A growl of evident satisfaction from the mob.)* Yes, you have been duped—if you would call it so, your confi-

dence was betrayed, and it is sad enough that I had to stoop to such means to keep you from a deed of unjust violence.

CASSAND. O father, what hast thou done? Thou hast sped the design of a most merciless fate, and sealed thine own doom. Already I can behold the sea furrowed by the keels of the stranger, and broad-bellied bottoms disgorge their spear-bristling hordes upon our shores. Look, how they sweep along, like some vast, rippling tide aglitter with the sheen of morning! Hear you not the clanging of their arms and the thunder of their martial tread? Lo, they are beating at the city's gates, and its bulwarks are tottering with the brunt of their numbers! Woe, woe to thee, ILIUM! carnage and destruction shall hold riot in thy streets, and the beauty of thy daughters be the spoil of the stranger. Woe to thee, ILIUM, woe! in the blindness of my sympathy I sought to avert thy doom, but, alas! the Fates have made my labor vain and a mockery forever.

PRIAM. See you now in what foolhardy halucination you were caught? Could there be a better exposition than this to show its utter absurdity? I really cannot understand how you could have lost yourselves so senselessly: for it is impossible for me to believe that you, who ever spurned and mocked the mad delusions of this my poor afflicted daughter, could thus suddenly and seriously permit her rant to faith. Alas! when such wild chimeras can thus

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easily bugbear you unto furious excess, I fear there is no dependence to be placed in you anymore.

I C. I believe myself that we were foolish.

II C. We ought to have known better than to oppose our King.

III C. Yes, and why did we do it?

I C. It seemed a foolish excitement swept us along.

II C. I hardly know now what it was all about.

III C. And yet you were ever the loudest in the matter.

II C. I?

III C. Yes, you.

II C. Don't you tell me that; everyone knows that you howled most.

I C. What is the use of quarreling about it now? The thing is done, and that ends it. All that we can do is to thank our King that it had no worse consequences.

SEVERAL. Yes, we can thank our King.

PRIAM. At last, at last, my people, you have come to your senses, of which I am highly pleased, even though my son is now beyond recall: for with HEMEROS I sent him to SPARTA.

OENONE. (*Breaking wildly through the crowd.*) Oh, he has not gone—say he has not gone from me.

PRIAM. He is now upon the high sea, sailing before a well-mettled breeze.

(OENONE reels and would have fallen to the floor but for CASSANDRA's timely bracing.)

PRIAM. What can he be to her?

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HERA. What can he be to her! (*Laughing contemptuously.*) She is a wanton that followed him from the mountain, and should not be tolerated among self-respecting people.

CASSAND. What, this from thee? Ah, I fear thou now revealest thyself in thy true light; for thy words prove thee vindictive and of a craven-heart.

HERA. I care not now what they prove me. The wench crossed me in all my plans, and deserves to be severely dealt with.

CASSAND. No one shall harm her while I am nigh. Though she thwarted me in my highest purpose, I bear her no malice; for she meant even as well as I did, and the Fates alone are responsible for the result. (*To OENONE, who lies reclining against her in a faint.*) Come, thou poor victim of an invidious destiny, I will bear thee from this unkind world and with the alchemy of my love seek to nurse thee back to peace.

OENONE. (*Recovering.*) Oh!—where am I? Where is he? Alas, gone—gone from me without a single word of farewell! Yet, why should I make sad complaint as long as he is safe? Nay, I ought to be happy if he but lives. For thus I can bear all, and may console myself with the hope that some day he will return to me.

CASSAND. Come, OENONE, go with me, I will give thee sisterly comfort.

OENONE. No, CASSANDRA, no; I have a fear of thee now, and would flee from the terror of thy deep-

groping thought. No; I will leave these close environments—environments where molders infests every breath, and almost stifles the soul. No; I will go back to my native haunts, where all is linked in vital sympathy and interwreathed unto a world of beauteousness and peace. Yet ere I go, let me tell you, ye people, that you were the play of vindictive Powers—Powers who, unable themselves to work their spite, labored you to that end. Yonder stranger, and he who appears to be HECTOR, are not what they seem. I will say no more. If this is not enough to open your eyes and make you forever self-reliant, the sore way of experience will eventually bring you unto that goal. (*Exit OENONE, slowly followed by CASSANDRA.*)

SEVERAL. Can she have spoken the truth?

HERA. Yes, the woman spoke the truth; let it be frankly admitted, since there can be nothing gained by a denial. We labored you with old wives tales and merely used you for a tool.

APHRODITE. (*Appearingly miraculously.*) Not so, I made a tool of you.

HERA. How that?

APHRODITE. By harnessing your opposition to my purpose; for PARIS is even now speeding to his promised reward—the fairest of women.

HERA and PALLAS. Baffled again!

APHRODITE. I am glad to see you so unanimously agreed on an obvious fact.

HERA. Thy taunt is void of sting, for we are not at the end yet.

PALLAS. No. Indomitable will from a thousand reverses at last shall pluck the desired fruit.

APHRODITE. Baffled rancor loves to gnaw the bitter rinds of hope and persuade itself that they are sweet. Yet you are welcome to the consolation, while success is mine.

(A faint thunder is heard, and the goddesses vanish miraculously, leaving all dumbfounded.)

CURTAIN

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112949LV00008B/331-333/A



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ISBN 1432546503



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